DR. VIJAY MALLYA : Sir, anybody can give these statistics.

डा. सत्य नारायण जटिया : हमारी कोशिश यह है कि .....(**व्यवधान**)

DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Sir, anybody can give all these statistics. I am talking about the practical effect of your expenditure.

श्री सभापति : मैं समझता हूं कि मंत्री महोदय इस पर विचार करेंगे। एक बार पहले भी सदन में इस पर चर्चा हुई थी और आज भी चर्चा हुई है। मुझे लगता है कि आपके उत्तर से माननीय सदस्यों को संतोष नहीं है। इनको संतोष कैसे कराया जाए, इसके लिए मैं निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि हर स्टेट के बारे में कौन-कौन से NGOsकिस-किस प्रकार की गतिविधियों में शामिल हैं, उनको कितने-कितने रुपये मिले हैं, किस प्रकार के नियम हैं, किस प्रकार का उपयोगिता प्रमाणपत्र नहीं दिया गया है, यह सारी जानकारी स्टेट-वाईज आप सभी स्टेट्स के एम.पीज़ को भिजवा दें और उनको लिख दें कि वे 3 महीने में इसके बारे में अपने-अपने सुझाव दें। मैं समझता हूं कि इससे समस्या का समाधान हो जाएगा।

डा॰ सत्य नारायण जटिया : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपका ध्यान इस ओर आकर्षित कर रहा हूं कि हमारी वार्षिक रिपोर्ट में सारे NGOsको जितना पैसा हम निर्मुक्त करते हैं, उसमें उनका नाम . .....(**व्यवधान**)

श्री सभापति : वार्षिक रिपोर्ट तो पूरी होती है। मैं समझता हूं कि आप स्टेट-वाईज़ दे दीजिए।

DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Sir, when they are responsible for thousands of crores of rupees, can they not have some sort of monitoring mechanism to supervise the quality of work also? All we get in this House are statistics.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Monitoring would come out of this sort of information, if the Government can provide it to the MPs.

DR. VIJAY MALLYA : Sir, they should not only provide the information, but also must take up the responsibility to see the quality of work done, and how the money is being spent.

Export promotion from N.E States

†369. SHRI B.J. PANDA :

MISS MABEL REBELLO :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to open a special office in Singapore to facilitate export promotion from the North Eastern States;

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the Home by Shri B. J. Panda.

(b) whether the venture seeks to promote export from seven North-Eastern States and Sikkim to East and South East Asia;

(c) whether this would also help to establish an export processing zone in North-East; and

(d) the items identified for the export?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Items identified generally for export from North East are:—

Fruits (Pineapple, Orange, Lemon, Banana, Papaya, Mango, Jackfruit and Apple), Flowers (Orchids), Minerals, Silk, Woolen Carpets, Cane and Bamboo Handicrafts, Tea, Coal, Commercial Plywood, Handloom Products, Minor Forest Products, Vegetables, Broom Stick, Spices (Ginger, Turmeric, Chilies), Medicinal Plants and Herbs, Tung Oil, Rubber.

SHRI B.J. PANDA: Sir, before I put my supplementary question, I must express my disappointment that the Ministry is not proposing to open an office in Singapore for promoting the North-East Region's exports. My hopes had been raised by an article published in a major newspaper on 2nd June that said that active discussions were on with the Singapore Government.

Nevertheless, Sir, the North-East Region States are a very critical part of the country. They share 98 per cent of their borders with other countries, and only two per cent of their borders with our country. And despite decades of having been categorised as Special-Category States, they are still considered under-developed, not just by international standards, but also by our own standards.

Sir, the hon. Minister has outlined the products which have been identified for promotion of exports from these regions. These are all traditional items, and many of them are of a perishable nature, like fruits, flowers, etc. These items have very high potential, but they suffer from a very significant disadvantage of lack of infrastructure and lack of logistics facilities. Some of these problems have been addressed in recent times

by Air India, for instance, by starting a flight, an international flight, directly from Guwahati. But there are many other handicaps, for example, lack of cold-storage facilities.

I would like the hon. Minister to inform us whether there are any schemes, or whether he proposes to introduce any schemes, to provide incentives for such infrastructural facilities in the North-East, like cold-chain facilities.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, I may mention, at the very outset, that commercial offices with our missions in all countries, including in Singapore, do take care of the interests of the country, which also includes the interests of the various States, as far as the promotion of trade is concerned.

As far as the Central Government is concerned, there are several initiatives that we have taken. As far as the promotion of trade in the North-East is concerned, there is an empowered committee, which has been processing the recommendations of a task force that was set up. Now, one of the objectives is to somehow make sure that the international trade emanating from North-East also exists. A special empowered fund has been created. An integrated scheme for development of four townships in this regard in the North-East has been set up. Besides this, the Centre has been operating different schemes in order to add to the infrastructure, which includes cold-chains and other infrastructure required for the trade.

The first is, there are several projects which have been sanctioned under the scheme called the "Critical Infrastructure Balance Scheme" and Rs. 68 crores have been sanctioned under this scheme. There is the ASIDE Scheme for developing and supporting the infrastructure in States, which is being supported by the Department of Commerce. In addition to this, there are Export Promotion Industrial Parks, which are also being set up in some of the North-Eastern States.

SHRI B.J. PANDA: Sir, another area which acts as a major handicap for not just the North-East but for most other areas is that while India's economic condition has been improving regularly and our foreign exchange reserves have been rising, this has contributed to the hardening of the Indian rupee and this acts as a barrier against exports. Sir, South-East Asia is a natural gateway for the North-East of our country but if the rupee is not competitive with other currencies, particularly with the Chinese

currency, it acts as a natural barrier. Would the hon. Minister please tell us what steps he proposes to take to overcome this barrier?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, as far as the overall export situation is concerned, whether it is the North-Eastern States or the national situation, the value of the rupee *vis-a-vis* dollar is going to have a natural impact on this. But despite the fact that the rupee started hardening against the dollar, more than a year ago, for the year ending 31st March, 2003, our export community had fairly well adjusted to that situation. Despite that handicap accompanied by other handicaps such as the slow down of global economy, the post-9-11 situation and also the hardening of the rupee which did contribute, we still managed about the second highest growth rate in terms of exports in the world. We had a 19.2 per cent growth rate last year. Therefore, our base had increased. But we must bear in mind that this 19.2 per cent growth last year was over a previous year where we had a negative growth. So, the base was a little lower. Now this problem we are particularly encountering this year when in the last six months there has almost been 4 to 5 per cent hardening as far as the rupee is concerned and our currency is determined by the various market factors. As against this, the Chinese currency has been pegged to the dollar and, therefore, their appreciation or depreciation is linked to the dollar and not otherwise. The third factor is that several other international currencies such as the Euro, the Pound have also hardened as far as the dollar is concerned and their hardening has been more than the hardening of the rupee. As far as the Indian exports overall are concerned, 80 per cent of our exports are dollar-linked; 20 per cent are linked to other currencies. Therefore, some impact of this would be felt. But so far our exporting community has been able to overcome it and we have maintained the double-digit growth in the first quarter, the first quarter growth being over 11 per cent as against the target of 12 per cent, despite the handicap which the exporting community is facing in terms of hardening of the rupee.

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Is there any helping centres in various parts of the world to export our goods to other countries?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, there are a very large number of export incentive schemes that are run by the Ministry of Commerce and a number of these schemes enable our exporters to import duty-free inputs into it. There are several other schemes which are being operative, and these

have proved to be considerable incentives as far as our exporting community is concerned. Besides these schemes, the Central Government has now been encouraging States to set up Special Economic Zones as far as the States are concerned. These Special Economic Zones become deemed foreign territories where there are a large number of fiscal concessions which are given in these areas, in these Zones, as a result of which exporting from these Zones to various parts of the world becomes increasingly competitive. As far as agriculture is concerned, there are the Agriculture Export Zones (AEZs) which are also being encouraged and a very large number of them in the last two years have already come up in many parts of the country.

*370. [The questioner (Shri P.K. Maheshwari) was absent. For answer *vide* page 49 *infra*.]

*371. [The questioner (Shri Harish Rawat) was absent. For answer *vide* page 49-50 *infra*.]

*372. [The questioners (Dr. A.R. Kidwai and Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy) were absent. For answer *vide* page 51 *infra*.]

Nutritional standard

*373. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that National Institute of Nutrition has conducted a survey to assess the nutritional standards of various States;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB) has undertaken a survey to study the nutritional levels in the drought affected States;

(c) if so, the findings thereof with special reference to Andhra Pradesh;

(d) the impact of Food for Work and Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) on the nutritional levels among the poor in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the steps taken to correct the nutritional imbalance among the poor sections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI R. RAJA): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.